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## Letter dated 2 April 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you information on the work carried out in Uzbekistan in the fight against human trafficking (see annex).

I would highly appreciate it if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 107.

(*Signed*) Murad **Askarov**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan

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## Annex to the letter dated 2 April 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

### Efforts by Uzbekistan to counter human trafficking

Since 2000, the need to counter human trafficking has formed one of the primary focuses of international cooperation within the United Nations.

In this process, an important landmark was reached by the international community with the adoption of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (New York, 15 November 2000). Uzbekistan acceded to the protocol by enacting the necessary national law on 8 July 2008.

Public policy and the State law of the Republic of Uzbekistan are underpinned by the protection of human rights and interests. Wide-ranging efforts are being carried out to put these legal safeguards into effect.

As stated in article 13 of the Constitution, "Democracy in the Republic of Uzbekistan is based on universal human principles pursuant to which the human being and human life, freedom, honour, dignity and other inalienable rights constitute the highest value".

Particular attention is given to the protection of human rights and to efforts to counter transnational crime, which undermines the development of society and the State. Human trafficking is one such crime and, in Uzbekistan, particular attention is given to efforts to prevent these crimes, to counter their perpetration and, in particular, to raise legal awareness among the country's citizens. A wide range of measures are used to heighten awareness among the public of this issue and to prevent young people falling victim to such iniquities.

The decision adopted by President Islam Karimov on 8 July 2008 on measures to step up the campaign against human trafficking constitutes a powerful driving force behind efforts to combat this crime and to extend the reach of preventive measures. Pursuant to the decision, a national plan of measures was duly ratified for the period 2008-2010, designed to step up the campaign against human trafficking.

In Uzbekistan, the human being, and human life, freedom, honour and dignity, along with other inalienable rights, are deemed to be among the highest of all values. Pursuant to article 26 of the Constitution, no one may be subject to torture, violence, or any other cruel or degrading treatment. These and other constitutionally guaranteed human rights are fully consistent with international legal tenets, in particular, those enshrined in article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, pursuant to which no one may be held in slavery or servitude, and slavery and the slave trade are prohibited in all their forms.

Determined steps are being taken in Uzbekistan to put these legal safeguards into effect. In particular, efforts to prevent human trafficking have been vigorously stepped up. Work continues on the identification of people who have fallen prey to this crime and on rendering them the necessary assistance. Cooperation is under way

with the law-enforcement agencies and with voluntary associations which are carrying out awareness-raising work among the population, holding workshops, training courses, round tables and other such measures to make the general public fully cognizant of the consequences of human trafficking.

In order to render assistance to the victims of human trafficking and to ensure their protection, the country's law provides for the creation of specialized facilities, primarily designed to ensure the social rehabilitation of the victims of human trafficking with a view to returning them to normal life. This social rehabilitation incorporates legal, psychological and medical support, assistance in finding work and the provision of temporary shelter to the victims of human trafficking.

Uzbekistan is actively pursuing efforts to combat human trafficking, in line with the relevant policy enunciated by the country's Government, as set out below:

- Pursuant to decision No. 576-II of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 12 December 2003, Uzbekistan has acceded to the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, which was approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 1949 by resolution 317 (IV);
- In 2003, the Oliy Majlis ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by the General Assembly in 2000 by resolution 55/25;
- By presidential decision No. 911 of 8 July 2008, on measures to step up the campaign against human trafficking, an interdepartmental commission was created in Uzbekistan on the countering of human trafficking and a range of measures adopted to establish specialized facilities for the protection and assistance of victims of human trafficking;
- President Karimov ratified the national plan of action to counter human trafficking, a strategic, nationwide plan for the period 2008-2010, which includes 19 separate measures involving the relevant authorities;
- In 2008, Uzbekistan adopted an act ratifying the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000);
- In 2008, Uzbekistan adopted an act on the accession of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2000);
- In 2008, pursuant to the adoption of the act on measures to counter human trafficking, amendments and additions were made to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

A major step in international cooperation in combating human trafficking was taken in 2007 with the convening of the international conference on the theme: "Trafficking in Women and Girls: Meeting the Challenge Together", and also with the adoption by the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

The Global Plan of Action urges Governments to mount coordinated and consistent responses to counter human trafficking, and to mainstream the issue of trafficking in persons into the broader policies and programmes of the United Nations, with a view to promoting development and strengthening security across the world. One of the main pillars of the Global Plan of Action is the establishment of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

A valuable contribution to this undertaking will also be made by the interactive dialogue on the theme: "Fighting human trafficking: partnership and innovation to end violence against women and children".

An evaluation of the implementation of the Global Plan of Action is scheduled for 2013. In that same year, at its fifty-seventh session, the Commission on the Status of Women will consider the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women.

During the interactive dialogue on 3 April 2012, organized with the assistance of the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking (whose membership includes 21 countries) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, discussions will turn on the impediments encountered in implementing the Global Plan of Action and ways to render more effective the joint efforts by the international community to eradicate human trafficking. The conclusions of the interactive dialogue will provide important input to subsequent meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women.

The Republic of Uzbekistan, as an active member of the Group of Friends, is determined to continue contributing to endeavours to combat human trafficking, to make thoroughgoing efforts to prevent trafficking through its national law and the enforcement of that law, and in every way to promote international cooperation in this field.